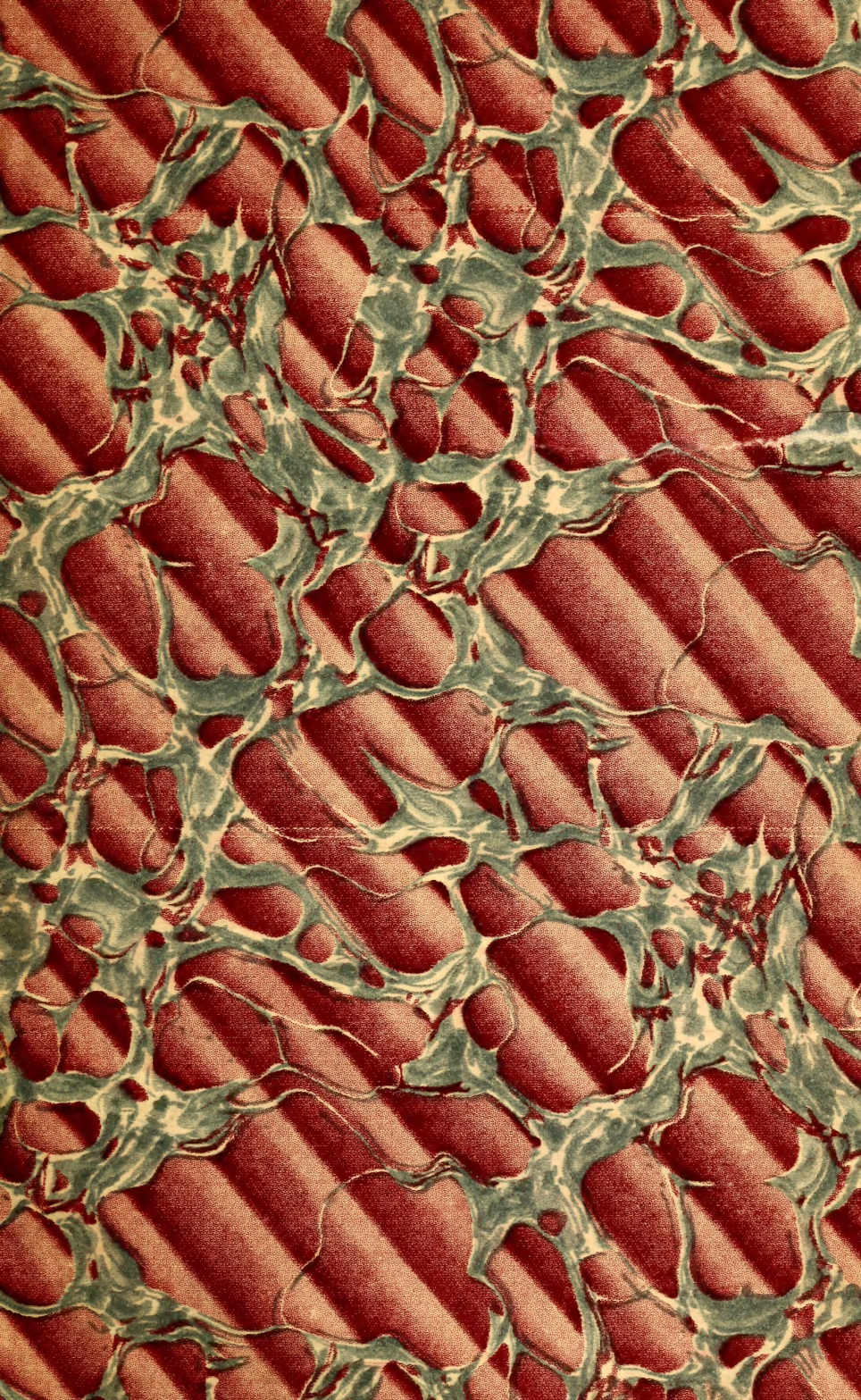


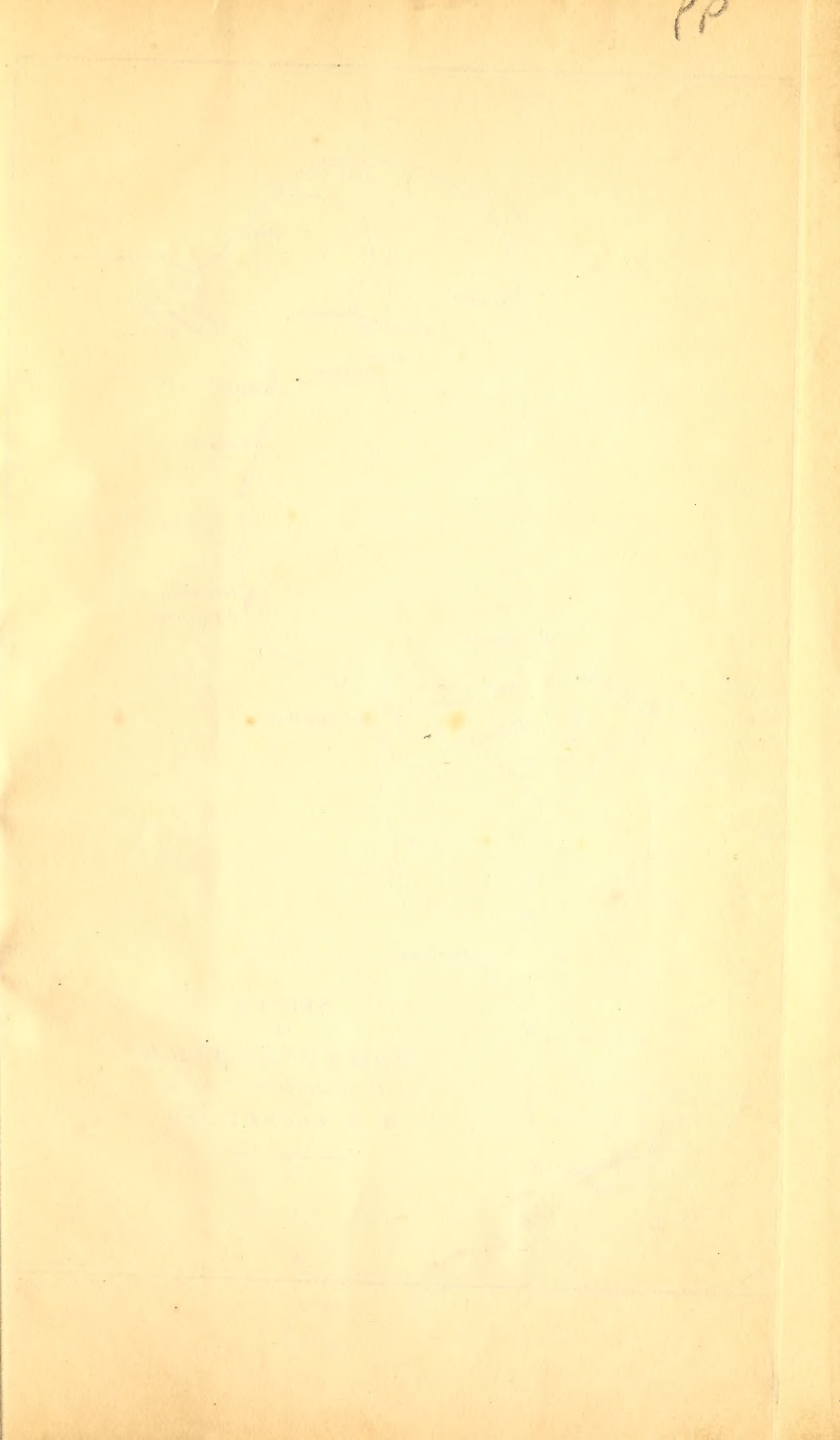
EXPEDITION
INTO THE
INTERIOR
OF
SOUTH AFRICA



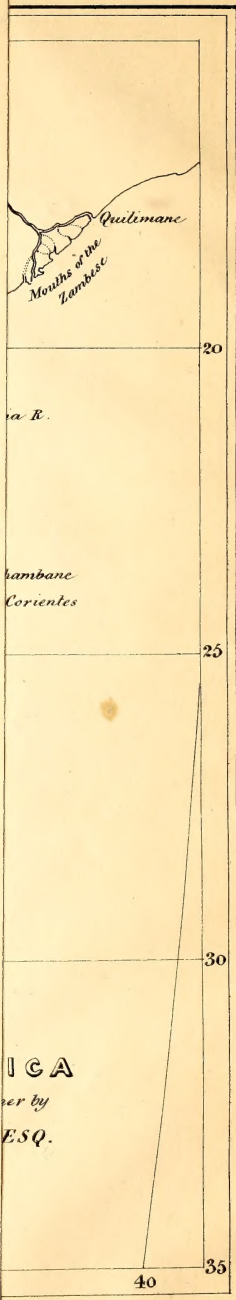
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C. Bradbury.

PROSPECTUS

OF AN

EXPEDITION INTO THE INTERIOR

OF

South Africa,

FROM DALAGOA BAY.

PATRONIZED BY THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

LONDON:
Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES,
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PROSPECTUS, &c.

THE mercantile travellers from the Cape Colony have explored the interior of South Africa nearly as far as the tropic, it is supposed, and to within a distance of six days' journey (about one hundred and fifty miles) from Dalagôa Bay*. As they advance northward, the country is found to be more fertile and populous. The trade becomes brisk at the distance of five or six hundred miles from the frontiers of the colony; but the great distance to be traversed must obviously not only reduce much of the profit of the merchant, but also limit the trade to the most portable commodities.

The colonial traders, being in general ignorant persons, bring back but little satisfactory information: their routes are limited by the motive which impels them—that is, by the hope of immediate gain; and in order to complete their discoveries, it would be requisite to send an expedition to connect the coast at Dalagôa Bay with the commercial routes of the interior.

The promotion of discovery in this quarter is recommended by many considerations. The natives of the interior are eager to profit from European instruction—they receive the missionaries with

* In 1827, Mr. Scoon visited the town of Malacatzi, at the sources of the Mapúta, by a route of fourteen hundred miles from Cape Town, and traded with that chief, in a few days, to the amount of 1800*l*. Malacatzi sent oxen to support him during the last two hundred miles of his journey. A Mr. Hume has recently proceeded two hundred miles farther north (Missionary Register, Feb. 1834), and found *many peaceable tribes*, speaking the Sichuana language, and obtaining *European goods* from the Portuguese.

open arms—they are fond of commercial pursuits—under ordinary circumstances, they are kind to strangers and honest in their dealings—and their language extends northward as far as the information of the missionaries reaches. It is thus evident,—first, that rude as are the natives of South Africa, a trade is perseveringly carried on with them by the colonists under great disadvantages; a trade which, without large gross profits, could not be carried on at all: secondly, that from the docility of the natives, and the probably rapid growth of the civilization, the seeds of which are now scattered among them, this trade will continually increase; and thirdly, that it may be prodigiously benefited by opening an intercourse with the interior, from Dalagôa Bay. An easy access would thus be at once obtained to the most populous country; the advantages of water-carriage would be secured—for the Mannees and Mapúta rivers are unquestionably navigable to a considerable distance during a great part of the year; many raw products, such as timber, iron, copper, &c., which cannot repay the expense of a protracted land-carriage, might be exported; the colony would be in a great measure relieved from the vexations of a frontier trade, and the natives would have the advantage of dealing with a more respectable class of men than the wanderers who at present teach them corruption and mistrust.

When the Dutch had possession of Dalagôa Bay (from 1721 to 1729), they exported ivory, tin, copper, gold, aloes, ambergris, and honey, besides timber to Cape Town. To this list of exports may be added the following articles:—iron, of the best quality, bees'-wax, gums, ostrich feathers, hides, horns, hippopotamus' teeth, and perhaps civet. The natives have many wants, but that of clothing is paramount; Surat cottons and soft woollens are the merchandise most highly prized. The skins of wild animals, of which they make their mantles, are many of them very beautiful, particularly those of the lynx, worn only by the chiefs. These skins might perhaps become a profitable article in the China trade.

From the remotest ages, the Hindoos have carried on a trade with Eastern Africa. An Arabian writer assures us that they exported iron from Sofala in the tenth century. The same trade still continues; and, in 1832, numbers of Indian vessels, from Cutch and Malabar, were busy in collecting iron along the African coast. The trade between India and the eastern coast of Africa—which, previous to the Portuguese conquests in the sixteenth century, was very considerable—will probably revive, and be carried on in some measure in English shipping, now that the monopoly of the East India Company is at an end. This circumstance adds additional importance to Dalagôa Bay, which is the only good harbour on the eastern coast from the Cape to the tropic; it is also the point at which the industrious tribes, who possess the useful metals in abundance, approach nearest to the coast.

If a traveller were to ascend the Mannees from Dalagôa Bay, or trace it so far as to establish its identity with the Mariqua, he would thereby make an addition to our geographical knowledge which might conduct to important consequences of a commercial nature. The natives of the interior, who are in the habit of dealing with the Portuguese, might be instructed where to find more liberal dealers, and how to conduct their trade in the manner most advantageous to both parties.

If by judicious and conciliatory measures the trade of the interior were drawn towards Dalagôa Bay, the island of Inyack would offer a secure, convenient, and perhaps a perfectly salubrious situation for a factory.

This journey would not be attended with much danger or expense. A traveller, appearing in the character of an ambassador, having in view the increase of trade, and taking care to associate only with the chiefs, would be sure of a hospitable reception from the natives. Guides would be found in Dalagôa Bay, where pack oxen might also be purchased, to carry the samples of merchandise and other luggage.

The above scheme aims at nothing immoderate or imprudent, and yet is capable of being easily extended, if circumstances permit.

The country between the Mannees and Zumbo might perhaps be explored without difficulty, and large blanks thus filled up in the map of Africa. Utility, safety, and comparative cheapness, however, have been adopted as the indispensable conditions of the proposed expedition. The chief expenses to be incurred are those of astronomical and other instruments, samples of merchandise, articles for presents, and the expense of travelling in the colony. The whole cost, as far as it can be estimated, can hardly exceed 500*l.* The Royal Geographical Society, after maturely examining the project, have deemed it deserving of their approbation and support, and have accordingly subscribed 50*l.* towards carrying it into execution. The remainder of the sum required will, it is hoped, be readily contributed by the friends of enterprise and discovery, and the discerning public in general. Captain Alexander, well known for his Travels overland from Persia, in the Balkan, and in America and the West Indies, has undertaken, in such case, to conduct the expedition.

Further particulars regarding the country thus sought to be explored will be found in a Paper published in the Journal of the Geographical Society, vol. iii., p. 310; which has been reprinted, and is on distribution at its Office, 21, Regent-Street. Subscriptions towards the Expedition are also received there; at Messrs. Cocks, Biddulph, and Biddulph, Bankers to the Society, 43, Charing-Cross; and Messrs. Martin and Co., Lombard-Street.

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